

IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION USING BIG BOOK

Dita Indah Fahmi, Luwandi Suhartono, Zainal Arifin

English Education Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
Tanjungpura University, Pontianak

Email: dytafahmie@yahoo.com

Abstract: This research is intended to know how well the use of Big Book in improving student's reading comprehension of the fifth grade students of SDN 32 Pontianak. The purposes of this research is to help students to cope with their problem in reading comprehension using Big Book. Students are able to comprehend the reading text. This research was a classroom action research which was conducted on the purpose to solve the problem that happened in the classroom action and to improve the teaching learning process. The data of classroom action research were collected through achievement test, field note and observation checklist. This research implemented three cycles, namely: planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The use of Big Book in improving students reading comprehension can be seen in every meeting or cycles that was observed by the researcher and her collaborator.

Keywords: Big Book, Classroom Action Research, Reading Comprehension.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini untuk mengetahui manfaat penggunaan buku besar untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas 5 SDN 32 Pontianak dalam pemahaman membaca. Tujuan dari penelitian ini membantu siswa untuk menyelesaikan masalah mereka dalam pemahaman membaca dengan menggunakan buku besar. Siswa- siswa diharapkan bias memahami isi dari bacaan teks. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas yang bertujuan untuk mengatasi masalah yang terjadi di dalam kelas dan untuk meningkatkan kegiatan proses belajar mengajar. Data dari penelitian tindakan kelas ini dikumpulkan dari tes pencapaian, catatan-catatan lapangan dan pengamat checklist. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam 3 siklus dan 4 langkah dalam setiap siklusnya: perencanaan, tindakan, observasi dan refleksi. Penggunaan buku besar untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam pemahaman membaca bias dilihat dalam setiap pertemuan atau siklus yang sudah di amati oleh peneliti dan kolaborator.

Kata kunci: Buku Besar, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas, Pemahaman Membaca.

Reading is one of the language skills that should be learned by the students. It is a learning process of transferring information from the writer to the reader in written form. The author is the sender of information, ideas and the reader is the receiver of the message. For decoding process by a reader, the reader moves from graphology (letter) to semantics (meaning). Therefore, the aim of reading is to attain an optimal level of comprehension of meaning. Reading gives many advantages for students because they can receive more information after reading. The information paragraph consists of words and sentences to build the meaning

of the content of reading material. Through reading the students can get information that they need.

Bamberger (1975: 13) states that reading is enjoyable when it is carried out efficiently and effectively; it will be useful and rewarding experience. It can provide the students with interesting information as well as helping them improve their English mastery. Reading is very important especially for elementary students in getting the authors idea when they are reading a text and beside that the students get information and knowledge from the reading material, for example concerning new vocabulary, different functions of new words in classification words, and the style of the authors in expressing ideas. Teaching English on elementary is not the same as and as easy as teaching adult. The fifth grade students of elementary school are still categorized as young learners so their cognitive and physiological condition are really different to adult. Raja (2001: 2) said "as one of learner characteristics, age has often been taught of as a major factor determining success in learning a second or foreign language. He also adds that language learning process is affected by both learners' characteristics and learning condition which determines the quality of the learning outcomes. Thus, it is clear that the characteristics should be taken under consideration before teaching and learning be conducted.

In teaching young learners reading, teaching medium is important to help young learners engage or understand the lesson. Usually, the general children characteristic tend to play rather than to study. Based on the writer own experience in teaching fifth grade students of SDN 32 in academic years 2013/2014 , It was found that the students easily get bored, short attention spans and easily distracted with their friend and other things when teacher explaining whereas they are fast learners actually. Many factors could contribute in this case such as boring situation, it would be more difficult to get all the children to focus on the same part of the text at the same time, classical and monotonous teaching. They are still unconfident in reading because of feeling afraid to make mistake in reading new vocabulary spelling and predicting meaning to answer the question. Furthermore, the data of the students' achievement score on reading comprehension (formative and summative test) had described that the students' score achievement was still not achievement. The KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum), the minimum level of achievement. The KKM for English subject is 70. However, the students' score was 54,70. It means that the score achievement is not achieved the KKM.

Dealing with the above problems, in this research the writer was interested to use a medium in reading because teacher of English subject should be able to create a joyful learning especially in fifth grade so that teaching learning process can be conducted well. This can be done if the teacher understands about teaching methods and techniques appropriate for the students in reading. It is good for teachers to use additional media to assist the process of teaching reading. In improving students reading comprehension the medium to be used is Big Book. Using Big Book in the classroom is not only an educational tool but also it is a way to make learning more interesting and memorable for students. The visual aid of Big Book is a sure hook to make good teaching sense in the classroom are

gives students the positive effects of reading experiences. Brown (1980: 315) explained “ before you read activity helps students to recognize the purpose of read before students read a text.” Large print and colorful illustrations allow whole classrooms to share good stories, serve a concrete focus for reading act and students become more understand about the content of the story or even stimulate students’ imagination. According to Dahl (2001: 43), one of the most effective ways to get young children involved with print is through the use of shared reading of enlarged texts. In shared reading, the teacher reads and the children actively participate in reading with the teacher's guidance. On the first several readings, the teacher usually does all of the reading. Big Book is considered to be one of the most effective ways of getting students involved with print (Strickland & Morrow, 1990 cited in Nambiar, 1993). Enlarged texts allow all the children in the classroom to see and react to the words. The Big Book facilitates use of the certain reading strategy such as reading aloud better than the normal size books and attract young children curiosity as well as sustain their enthusiasm. According to Lynch (2008: 35) Big Book creates secure and relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and attracts students’ attention in teaching and learning process.

METHOD

This research conducted in action research where the researcher pays more attention to the teaching and learning process. Classroom action research is the research where the teacher also the researcher, where teacher tries to make a better teaching learning process. In short, by doing a classroom action research, teacher reflect on their own practice, know the weaknesses and decide what action should be taken in order to improve the situation and practice. The subject of this research the class A of the fifth grade students of SDN 32 In academic year 2013/2014 that consist of 30 students.

Technique, Tools, Procedure of Data Collecting and Data Analysis

The appropriate technique of collecting data is very important to obtain the objective of the research. By choosing and using and appropriate technique, it will guarantee that the hypothesis can be tested and the outcome of the research can be considered objectively. In this research, the writer will carry out two techniques in collecting data, those are: Measurement and Observation. The writer will conduct the measurement and observation when she is taking data in the classroom where the teaching learning process occurs. Techniques and tools of Data collecting applied in this research are: (1) Field notes, the researcher save the process of all the activities in form of a note that recorded what actually happen in the classroom when the strategy is applied in class

The teacher administers the treatment with the help of collaborators. The collaborators are also the teachers in this research location, where in the classroom, the collaborators act as the observers that observe the treatment. The researcher researches the real problems found and analyzes the caused then decides what action should be taken to solve the problem. Then, in evaluating the changes of the action taken or treatment, researcher reflects on her teaching after she takes a note or she observed with her collaborators. Therefore, the research is such a teaching process which is divided into cycles. The researcher made kind of

note when the research was conducted. Such kind of note was constructed by the researcher who acts as a collaborator when the research is conducted. It was taken after the teaching learning process and in form of the descriptions and tables that contain planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. (2) Observation Checklist Table, observation checklist table is used to observe students in classroom activity in the form of checklist table which cover the students' activities in answering some questions after they have been read together during the lesson. (3) Achievement test, achievement test is kind of multiple choice test items in which student's comprehension to be assessed. The scores of the students described into classically achievement percentage by using the formula mean score. The procedures of this research consist of four steps. Those are planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Norton (1983: 73), the purpose of the research determine the methodology and design of the research. Hence, by taking info into consideration about the purposes of this research, the researcher decides to apply Classroom Action Research (CAR).

This is reasonable because to improve and develop teaching, indeed research into classroom is needed. According to Smith (1994: 217) action research is small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention. (a)Planning, the writer plans teaching learning activities to overcome the problem and prepares everything the writer and the collaborator need in doing research. The planning is the preparation before the teaching learning activity. (b) Acting, in this phrase, the writer will conduct the research in the classroom where the problem is found. The writer in this stage will acts as teacher. The teaching – learning process is will be done by following the lesson plan that had been prepared before. (c) Observing, at this stage, the teacher observes the implementation of student's activity during the stage, by observing the test result, observation checklist and field notes. So, the teacher knows the students achievement during the class activity. (d)Reflecting, based on the note taken, the writer analyzes the data collecting and reflects on the outcome. From the analyses, the writer gets some important feedback. This is very useful in re-planning the next activity.

It can change a certain action or add more action in order to improve teaching learning process. The data will be analyzed by reflecting the fact or information taken from the field notes, observation sheets and achievement test. Therefore, a collaborator or observer is needed. Both teacher and collaborator had to analyze the students' activity. In this research, the writer will focus on the computation of students individual score and mean score as it is the best indicator of the combined performance of an entire individual or group of participants. The data is the score of students answer in multiple choice test. These have been done by both the teacher and the collaborator to get objective data. Each correct answer got 1 point. After that, the data from students' worksheet obtained by calculating the mean score of all students.

The data is the score of students answer in multiple choice test. These have been done by both the teacher and the collaborator to get objective data. Each correct answer got 1 point. After that, the data from students' worksheet obtained by calculating the mean score of all students.

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{S}$$

Note: M = mean score
 $\sum X$ = sum of individual score
 S = number of students

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings

How the use of Big book can improve students reading comprehension

After conducting a research improving students reading comprehension using Big Book in SDN 32 Pontianak in academic year 2013/2014, the researcher presented the findings of this action research. The data are taken from achievement test, observation checklist and field note.

This research was conducted in two cycles on November 24 until 7 February 2014. During applying the strategy, the researcher and teacher cooperated to record what actually happened in classroom by using field notes. The teacher's view of the process was very important to avoid the subjectivity of the researcher. After giving the students' worksheet, the researcher computed the students' score and classified the mean score into the qualification. Afterward, both the researcher and teacher reflected on the teaching-learning process whether it had been in line with the planning. All those steps were done to obtain the research findings.

The tools of data collecting consist of multiple-choice questions. The data from the student worksheet, each correct answer got 1 point. After that, the data from students' worksheet obtained by calculating the mean score of all the students.

To compute the class performance, the researcher used the formula of mean score. All individual scores summed and divided by the number of students in the class.

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{S}$$

Note: M = mean score
 $\sum X$ = sum of individual score
 S = number of students

The result categorized as follows:

Total Score	Category	Qualification
80 – 100	A	Excellent
60 – 79	B	Good
50-59	C	Average
0-49	D	Poor

(David P.Harris. 1969:134)

Based on Students' standard minimum score for English subject in this school is 70 point.

The research findings were discussed based on the result of the field notes. The description is as follows:

1. First Cycle

(a). Planning Stage, during teaching the eleventh grade students of SDN 32 Pontianak, especially in class V, the researcher investigated some problems that happened in reading. As indicated earlier, the problems were the students' poor understanding of reading the texts and reading materials. It happened because the students faced difficulties in identifying meanings and the information in text, then it is difficult for students to find the main idea, the meaning of the vocabulary. These problems made the students become poor reader. The researcher prepared the lesson plan, observation checklist table, and from of field notes. The lesson plan is a way to make an effort so that the students got involved in the teaching-learning process. (b). Acting Stage, the teacher greeted the students and prayed together. Next, the teacher checked the students' attendance list in the class. Then, the teacher motivated students to motivate them in teaching learning process. All activities followed the rules as written in lesson plan. Next, the teacher asked students about the things at home. The example is "What do you know about your home? Can you mention what things at home? These questions lead the students knew about the material of the text would given. It made the students keep their attention on the lesson that would explained by the teacher. The teacher explained the materials then she described kinds of things at home and language feature. After that the teacher introduced one of reading media that was Big Book, using technique storytelling, first the teacher showed the students a Big Book that already have a picture series without texts then teacher and students held discussion to fill in the blank box from see the picture.

The students listened carefully when the teacher explained about our teaching media " Big Book" in reading and using story telling strategy. After having finished explaining about that media, the teacher gave text, entitle "Pedro House" to the students. Then, the teacher read aloud first and then asked them to read that text. Furthermore, the teacher guided the students to apply the steps in reading using Big Book:(1)The teacher displayed the Big Book cover. Point to and read aloud the title and the author's name. Ask students what they see in the photo or illustration on the cover. Briefly explain the topic of the book they will

be reading. Ask students to work in group and to make connections to the text by sharing what they know about the topic. (2) The teacher invited students to list key words from the Big Book on the board. Read the words with students and discuss their meanings. Then state each definition in random order and ask students to name the word. (3) Then teacher asked students to make flashcard about the new vocabulary that they already discuss to know how well they now the meaning. (4) Share the book. Teacher read aloud the Big Book all the way through. Then reread, encouraging students to join in. As proceed through the book, guide comprehension and prompt discussion with questions to develop literal and improve students critical thinking skills. (5) The students responded to the text. Encourage discussion so students can share their responses to the book, and find personal meaning and connections to the content.

After that, the teacher distributed the worksheet for the students and they were required to answer the worksheet. It was the time for students to do the exercise to measure how far they understand of the materials through reading using Big Book. It is consists of ten questions where each questions have ten point. The students have twenty five minutes to finish their assignment. Furthermore, they were doing the assessment, when the bell rang; all students submitted the answer sheet. The students completed answering the questions exactly twenty minutes. At the end of the activities teacher and the students reviewed and concluded the materials.

(c)Observing stage, during the observing stage, both the researcher and the teacher observed the students' behavior and the technique. The teacher wrote the field notes. The researcher and the teacher discussed about the meeting. They checked the students' answer and gave score. However, the result was still not satisfying.

Discussion

The classroom action research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning stage, acting stage, observing stage, and reflecting stage. The acting stage was conducted in one meeting (2 x 35 minutes) that was performed during the teaching-learning process. The researcher needed a collaborator to observe what was happening in the classroom and to take some notes. The presence of collaborator was to minimize the subjectivity of the researcher while interpreting the data. The data was collected in the form of students' assignment, and field notes.

In the first cycle the problems that happened in this cycle were the situation in the class. The students made noise. They talked with their friends without paying attention to the teacher explanation. The students had difficulty in predicting the meaning. In the first cycle the teacher found the students problem about the main idea in the texts and gets the information learn about the topic. The result for the students' mean score in the first was 58.60. It was categorized as Average.

The second cycle, the teacher and collaborator discussed strategies to minimize the problems before starting the class. The teacher made groups of

students to do this learning process and the students felt enthusiastic in learning English. The students applied reading strategy using Big Book in group and they share idea and discussed with their group. The problems in the second cycle were unfamiliar word. In the post activity, all students could finish their test and the teacher gave a chance for the students to share their difficulties during teaching-learning process. After observing the process and interpreting data, the teacher decided to stop the actions because the data showed that indicators of success was satisfying with the result of students' mean score was 77,66. It was categorized Average to Good.

Big Book media is one of many media that can be applied in the classroom activities and for young learners. In teaching reading comprehension, reading using Big Book is also recommended, because: (a) It can establish students' the positive effect in reading experience. (b) Sets purposes for reading and students' imagination. (c) Helps students to monitor their comprehension. (d) Make students memorable and interesting books of fact after reading

From those reasons Big Book can improve reading activities in teaching and learning process. Big Book media helped students especially in two parts. First, when student made list of unfamiliar words to learn. In this part the students share to predict the meaning of unfamiliar words and the information about the text that can made easy to comprehend what they learned next. Second, when student made list of what they learned after they read the text. In this part the students write their information about what they already know and got from the text. The steps in Big Book made students easy to comprehend and understand the text from see the large and colorful picture. It can improved students achievement.

The findings showed that the students' mean score in the first cycle was 58.60 and qualified as Poor. In the second cycle the students' mean score was increasing to 77.66 and qualified as Average to Good. This result was supported by the students' individual score. This showed the fact that from 30 students, 90% of students had increased their individual score. Based on the result, the media was so helpful for the students that they could improve their comprehension of the text passage. This resulted in the increasing of both students' individual score and students' mean score.

In conclusion, the research findings of the classroom action research were satisfying. All the indicators of success had been fulfilled. Students'

mean score was increased and teaching-learning process became better. Big Book as media helped the students learn and make the students easy to understand contain of text in learning English especially reading activity.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The conclusions of this research are: (1) the students' reading comprehension on descriptive text to the fifth grade of SDN 32 Pontianak in academic year 2013/2014 had improved by using Big Book. (2) The students reading comprehension had improved from the first cycle to the second cycle

when Big Book applied as the media in teaching and learning process. The mean score in the first cycle was 58.60, the second cycle was 77.66. (3) Teaching reading using Big Book could positively involve the students in the process of teaching and learning activity. Big Book media could improve students' attention and participation in reading class activity. (4) The big book is an appropriate media is an appropriate using for young learners.

Suggestions

After concluding the research finding, the researcher wishes to give some suggestion as follow: (1) It is suggested that teacher have to involve media in teaching reading comprehension. The teacher could use big Book as a media in order to help the students improve their reading comprehension. (2) It is suggested to teacher to use it with minimize the cycle in improving reading comprehension on text. (3) It is suggested to teacher to explain clearly about Big Book media and other media before stating to apply this in order to get students attention and participant. (4) It is suggested to teacher to do cooperative learning by each student in group in order to easy to share their idea or discussed the passage. (5) It is suggested to teacher to choose interesting title about the text in order to made students' easy to understand about texts, meaning and describes thing or information in passage.

The using of Big Book should manage the time; because it was time consuming and the unexpected situation needs to be considered in the classroom. For instance, when doing reading using Big Book the students talk another business. Thus, the teacher has to handle them well.

Bibliography

Bamberger ,R. (1975) . *Promoting Reading Habit*, The Unesco Press, Paris.

Brown, H, Douglas. (1980). *Principle of Language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prective Hall Inc.

Dahl, K. L., Grogan, P. R., Lawson, L. L., Scharer, P., L. (2001). *Rethinking Phonics: Making The Best Teaching Decisions*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Lynch,Priscilla. (2008). *Using Big Books and Predictable Books*. Scholastic : Canada Ltd.

Nambiar, M. (1993). *Early Reading Instruction-Big Books in the ESL Classroom.pdf* .retrieved on February 20,2012.

Norton , D,E. (1983). *Through the eyes of a child : An introduction to children's literature*,Charles E. Merrill publishing Company, Ohio.

Putnam, Penguin. (2001) *The Read Aloud Handbook* (5th ed.) by J. Trelease

- Raja, P. (2001). *Should We Teach English Early ?* *TEFLIN*, 12,1.
- Smith, B. (1994). *Through Writing to Reading*. London: Routledge.
- Strickland, D,S. (1990) *Emergent Literacy: How young children learn to read. Educational Leadership*, 18-23.
- Strickland, D,S. and Morrow, L,M. (1990) *Emerging teachers and writers: Sharing Big Books. Reading Teacher*, 43, 342-343.

